



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

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### Census Inquiry Service doing the job

"Despite some minor problems the Census has got off to a strong start," the Head of Census Paul Williams said today.

"The Census Inquiry Service has handled to date close to 200,000 calls and, apart from a technical glitch on Monday morning, has worked well.

"The ABS handles this volume of calls by providing an automated system that deals with the most common questions and issues up front, with the more complex calls being dealt with by an operator.

"The main call centre is located in Geelong, with a smaller one in Ultimo and a multilingual call centre in Carlton. In total there are about 848 people handling calls from the public.

"As expected there were a large volume of callers during the day of 8 August, leading up to Census night, and this meant that at busy periods there were wait times of a maximum of five minutes to speak to an operator. On Census night, the wait time was down to a few seconds.

"Alternative systems, where everyone could speak directly to an operator would require both considerable extra expense of taxpayers' money and/or much longer wait times for the public.

"The initial phase of collection operations continues until 28 August. The vast majority of Australians have got a Census form. But a small number still do not have a form. We will do our best to get Census forms to these people as soon as possible. These people can contact the ABS by calling XXXX XXX XXX, or emailing [census.forms@abs.gov.au](mailto:census.forms@abs.gov.au) and supplying us with their residential address.

"Contrary to some rumours, people won't be penalised for filling in their form after Census night. Just fill in your form when you get it, with reference to how your household was on the night of 8 August.

"The ABS appreciates the patience of the public and their commitment to the Census."

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